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SEP 24 1924



BULLETIN OF
THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS
of the City of Detroit

Vol. V

MARCH, 1924

No. 6



DUTCH CABINET IN RED LACQUER, XVII CENTURY
GIFT OF MRS. RALPH H. BOOTH

GIFT OF ANTIQUE FURNITURE

During the past few months the Institute has received some very important gifts of antique furniture, which will fill some of the gaps in the collection of decorative arts. One of the most important of these gifts are the four pieces presented by Mrs. Ralph H. Booth: a XVI Century Spanish cabinet; a Dutch cabinet in red lacquer; a XV Century choir stall; and an inlaid English cabinet of the latter part of the XVII Century, all fine examples of their various types and important standards for the student of antique furniture.

The Spanish cabinet has a particular interest in illustrating the various influences which affected the Spanish cabinet maker's art in the XVI Century. The upper part of the cabinet, with its gilding and bone "*intarsia*" or "*piqué*," shows the strong Moorish influence that prevailed in Spain nearly a century after the Moors had been driven out of the country, while in a similar way the wrought iron hinges and ornaments on the drop leaf front show how the Gothic tradition lingered on into the XVI Century. On the other hand, the arches and carved ornaments on the stand are decidedly Renaissance in style and belong to the period in which the cabinet was made and illustrate the Italian influence that dominated most of the art of this century. It is a distinctive piece and one that will be much admired.

The choir stalls, which have been installed in the Renaissance room, are North Italian of the late XV Century. They are of heavy walnut, well proportioned, and their carved arches and mouldings follow the style of the doors and windows of the Florentine palaces which were in turn derived from pagan Roman art.

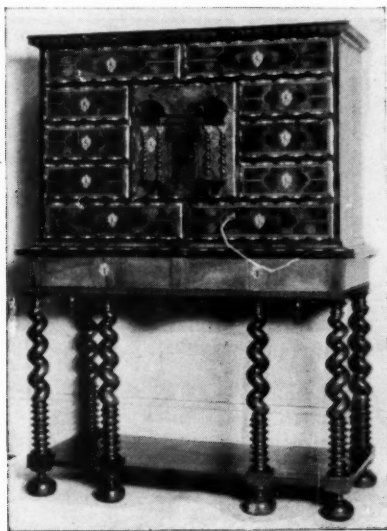
Of strong contrast to this Spanish and Italian furniture is the Dutch cabinet in imitation red Chinese lacquer. It is of the period (the latter part of the XVII Century) when the Dutch, like France and England, through their trading with the East, began to absorb ideas from the Chinese and to copy and adapt some of their forms and decorations. European designers were especially attracted to the use of lacquer, which had reached such a high state of perfection in the countries of the East, particularly China and Japan, and began using it in their furniture in various ways. In some instances panels from Chinese and Japanese screens were attached to the front of chests and cabinets, often producing rather quaint effects. Then, again, they conceived the plan of sending their pieces to the Oriental workshops to be lacquered. But as this was very costly, an imitation lacquer was soon made at home which emulated the Oriental. The cabinet presented by Mrs. Booth is one of home manufacture. It is a com-

bination cupboard and writing desk with double doors concealing many drawers, of the type so often met with in this period. The whole cabinet is covered with brilliant vermilion and black lacquer, with delightful decorative scenes in blue, black and green on the drawers and doors. These naive scenes, picturing Dutch hunters in imaginary Oriental landscapes, have a charm that is quite unique, while at the same time they show us how little the European really knew about the conventions of Oriental art in spite of the descriptions of travelers and the objects of art sent over by the Orientals themselves. The imaginative Chinese temples and pagodas are set in the midst of bizarre looking palm, cherry and "monkey" trees, while hunters of distinctly Dutch origin, armed with guns or

spears and accompanied by their dogs, are shooting the strange looking birds and animals or "sticking" the wild boar.

The other cabinet is XVII Century English. It is inlaid with green and white polished horn and a lighter wood and has the characteristics of both the earlier and later XVII Century. The turned legs and bun-shaped feet are Jacobean in type, as is also the thistle design of the wrought iron ornaments, the emblem of the Stuarts. The marquetry work belongs more to the William and Mary period of the latter part of the century and the cabinet was evidently made in that period while still retaining some of the Jacobean characteristics.

The four pieces will make an important contribution to the period rooms of the new building. J. W.



ENGLISH XVII CENTURY CABINET. GIFT OF MRS. RALPH H. BOOTH

AN INNESS GIVEN BY THE DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART FOUNDERS SOCIETY



"HUDSON RIVER VALLEY," BY GEORGE INNESS
GIFT OF DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART FOUNDERS SOCIETY

Fortunate indeed is the collection which can boast of an Inness representing the full flower of this artist's style. Still more fortunate it is to be able to point out in the same galleries also another landscape that shows Inness when he was still faithful to the traditions of the Hudson River men but contributing to their manner a new and greater expression.

"*The Apple Orchard*," dated 1892, given in memory of Henry Brockholst Ledyard by his children, shows Inness at his best. The picture is composed synthetically. The artist has realized the value of omission, the power of suggestion. "*The*

Hudson River Valley," dated 1867, recently given by the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society, is transitional. In it Inness reflects his inborn analytical mind. Detail has been given importance. Composition by massing is beginning to receive attention. The mature Inness landscape was only possible, however, because of such early, elaborated method. One must understand the parts to know their relative importance.

The artist grew up around New York and was early apprenticed as a map engraver. This work was too taxing to the rather frail youth.

With very slight instruction by Regis Gignoux and with some study of prints after old pictures, George Inness was sufficiently successful to make sales to the Art Union. In 1847 he went to London and continued his travels in Rome for fifteen months.

While he had been interested in form and in accurate representations, he came to learn, especially abroad, the value of selection and elimination, and of synthetic composition in masses. The former method was a tradition from members of the Hudson River School like Kensett, Durand, Casilear and from German objective realism. His latter style was in the French manner, exemplified by the Barbizons.

As the artist passed from the first to his last style, he hesitated on the way, not always painting pictures that were perfect entities. Sometimes his values were not well balanced nor "in plane." At this time, before 1865, "*Peace and Plenty*" in the Metropolitan Museum was painted. He had become broader, really painting and not merely delineating, though still giving details a place.

"*The Hudson River Valley*," painted in 1867, is similar. Against a real sky with texture of varied values is a hill—a mountain as it would be called in the East. Where it slopes down to the valley its voluminous form is lighted by the golden sunshine. One can almost

see around to the other side, so masterfully has the light been handled. The sky there is brighter, too. The sinking sun is behind that point.

Successive bands of light and shade, of trees and open spaces, mark the way from foreground to background. Cattle graze here and there in groups, under the trees and by the little brook just before us.

The picture has an unusual history for an early American canvas. It was bought for the Jacob Schiff collection, and was in the Stadel Museum, in Germany at "Frankfort-on-the-Main." That Museum planned to build up a representative collection of American Paintings. As time passed, however, this dream did not materialize. Detroit was thus able to secure their Inness.

In these Inness pictures and the "*View of Whiteface Mountain*," painted by Alexander H. Wyant, the Art Institute has the links between the first national expression in American landscape painting and that of today. The first interprets a spirit of wonder at the dominating, infinite grandeur of this land. The next, a transitional stage, indicates selection and elimination, a greater understanding of relative values. Instead of allowing the land to dominate, our forefathers at this time were beginning to turn to their advantage, nature's offerings. Today one sees in the painting and in the life of this land a more complete expression of this second, hesitant step.

R. P.

HANDICRAFT FROM THE WIENER WERKSTAETTE



Flagon

Sugar Container

Goblet

VIENNESE METAL WORK
GIFT OF MR. GEORGE G. BOOTH

One's aesthetic reaction changes from time to time. Most persons probably, at a certain stage, will therefore enjoy art which is unique in character. Six objects of handicraft from the Wiener Werkstaette (the Vienna Workshop), given to the Detroit Institute of Arts by George G. Booth, are decidedly unique, artistic, and of a beauty that has an air of elegance.

The objects have been carefully selected from the large collection which was originally exhibited in New York City. This consisted of jewelry, ceramics, silks, laces, wall papers and objects in papier maché, richly tooled-leather, enamel, metal and ivory. They gave an impression of contrast in black and silver, of brilliant color combinations and of

naive, fantastic design. They were installed in specially constructed cubicals, recesses, and niches, principally of light plaster, by Joseph Urban, a great stage craftsman. This exhibit was later seen in Chicago, Denver, and elsewhere, with much success.

The work illustrated several facts: first a true understanding and facility of technique. In the second place the handling is that which experience has found to be sound. Finally, the spirit is simple, almost childlike, but with a refreshing viewpoint and originality, of creative, spontaneous, and brilliant work. This has been particularly true of the metal examples, like those recently given to Detroit.

These six gifts are a gold-washed

wine or loving-cup with lapis lazuli knob upon the cover and with a base consisting of a vine or tendril motif of perforated gold. The second is a silver flagon with a rhythmic fluting and with berry and leaf ornaments. The third is a tall, silver sugar container with leaf and clustered grape repousse forms upon the sides. On the cover and under the base are ovoidal forms. The fourth is a gold and ivory case with a delicate plaque representing the quaint figure of Spring. Another piece of jewelry is an ivory pendant with chain of gold showing a modern interpretation of the Virgin and Child, in a medallion of flowers beautifully carved on both sides. These personages show a resemblance to those of Botticelli, though there is no connection between the two, of course. The last object is a carved gold and ivory case for a miniature. Vines and an amusing head are worked into the gold forms that are silhouetted against the ivory.

To the writer, who studied the collection in New York, the metal work appeared to be the most inter-

esting. Fine technique, practicality, attractiveness, and individuality, distinguish such examples.

George W. Eggers, Director of the Denver Art Museum, in writing about the collection when it was shown in Denver, saw in it a number of influences—the traditional, the experimental, and reflections of peasant and medieval art. In the second place he saw a feeling of classic forms and of exotic modernism, colored by the Orient and animated by restless modernity.

Finally he said that the objects had a "hint of the Eighteenth Century baroque, often drifting vaguely across the design like the fragrance of a pot-pourri of that elegant and artificial and somewhat decadent time."

This group will add a different and valuable note to the most important collection of contemporary handicraft, especially of ivory and precious metals from England, Scandinavian Countries, Russia, France and America, which Mr. George G. Booth and others have given from time to time.

R. P.

The Museum is also open Friday Evenings from 7:30 to 9:30.

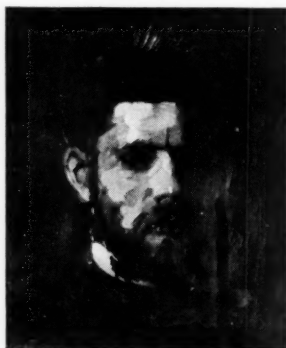
MUSEUM OF ART FOUNDERS SOCIETY

THE MEMBERSHIP REPORT of the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society for the period from December 1st, 1923, to February 5th, 1924, shows the following new members: 292 annual members, 44 contributing members, 4 sustaining members and 1 governing life member.

BEQUEST OF MISS ELIZABETH CHAMPE—In the will of Miss Elizabeth Champe, dated January 4th, 1917, the Detroit Museum of Art Founders Society becomes the recipient of five thousand dollars. This legacy is given to the Museum for the purchase of a picture to be known as the "Elizabeth Champe Gift." The Board of Trustees is making a careful survey of available paintings suitable to become a permanent memorial to Miss Champe under this bequest.

Through this provision in her will Miss Champe is enrolled as one of the large donors of the Museum with the title of Fellow.

THE NEW TEXTILE ROOM on the first floor will be opened March 1st with an exhibition of old laces loaned to the Institute by Mrs. Rockefeller McCormick. It will afford an opportunity to lace lovers to study the history of this delightful handicraft



HEAD BY DUVEINECK

during the last five centuries of its development.

In the collection are pieces of XV Century Sicilian drawn-work with its naive, archaic designs; remarkable examples of *buratto* and darned *lakis*; the beautiful *reticello*, from its first simple geometric designs to the

more complex patterns that marked the later *reticello*; pieces of *punto in aria*, including the famous "Rose" point piece, considered the finest of its type in the country; several fine pieces of the bobbin and pillow laces of Flanders, Brussels and Spain, and many yards of the finest Milan point and graceful *Guipure de Venise*.

"A MAN'S HEAD," BY FRANK DUVEINECK has been added to the permanent collection of the Detroit Institute of Arts. Its strongly constructed form is all the more apparent because it is a sketch.

To quote John Singer Sargent, "After all is said, Frank Duveineck is the greatest talent of the brush in this generation." At the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Duveineck was given a special medal, the highest award.

The "Duveineck Boys," pupils whom he helped, include William M. Chase, Joseph DeCamp, John W. Alexander and Julius Rolshoven.